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OLC 72-0805

14 July 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with Ed Braswell re Laos Ceiling

25X1A	l. This afternoon, OPPB, and I discussed the above	
	matter with Ed Braswell, Chief Counsel, Senate Armed Services Committee	•
!	We said we were confused as to the basis of the decision to cut the Laos	
25X1A	ceiling from We said that such a cut might	•
	well seriously impair the entire U.S. program in Laos for FY 1973. In	
	responding, Braswell made the following points:	
!	a. The Committee has reported out the Defense Procurement	
:	Authorization bill with Symington ceiling for Laos.	25X1A
	b. This figure was proposed by Senator Symington and	
	accepted by the Committee with the full understanding that it	
	was to cover all Laos war-related expenditures including both	
1		25X1A
	for the original request for proposed by the Adminis-	25X1A
	tration.	
	c. Braswell confided that the Committee's problem was that	
	nobody in the Administration seemed able or willing to speak up	

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in presenting its figures.

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clearly on the importance of a higher ceiling. He also complained that the Defense Department had not been candid with the Committee.

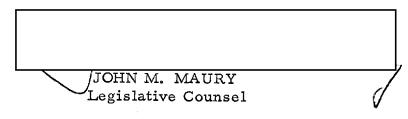
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- d. In these circumstances, Braswell saw no hope that anyone in the Committee would be willing to reopen the matter on the floor and push for a higher ceiling. He did comment, however, that if we wanted to pursue this possibility the place to start would be to try to persuade Symington himself to reconsider and accept a higher ceiling.
- e. When asked the possibility of getting the ceiling raised in conference, Braswell said he couldn't predict anything in this regard.
- f. Braswell repeated several times that the real problem was that there was "no one in charge" of the Laos problem--DOD doesn't seem particularly interested and the State Department has been ambivalent. On another occasion he commented that "the Administration is hiding" on Laos.

g. Braswell voiced the	personal opinion that the Administration
could "live with" t	ceiling since its earlier requests 25X1A
had been inflated.	<u> </u>

2. In conclusion, Braswell said that the only other course open to 25X1A us was to try to get the White House to make a strong pitch to the Congress.



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